

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters



'Fear not' 'Do not be afraid' The words of today's Gospel are spoken by Jesus to his disciples in the context of the 'missio' - his sending them out, two by two, to proclaim the Gospel. They are sent two by two, and not alone, so that the church, which means is communion, may be visible.

Holiness is not, as some may think, personal perfection, but rather it is communion with others. To be in communion with another person means to have experienced in one's own flesh the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is only possible to be in communion, to love, if we die to self. It is

only possible to see the love of God the Father if our ego, our plans, our designs, our wants, are buried with the old man in the waters of Baptism.

This is what God is doing with each of us. It is the key that allows us to embrace his will, and not cling to ours. It is the means by which we relate to others not out of affection or sentimentality, but in faith.

This is a great Good News for all of us, for me and for you. As I leave Woodcliff Lake and move to Bergenfield I can do so in faith. As you bid farewell to me and welcome Fr. Jason, you also do so in faith.

We have had twelve wonderful years together, and I think we have been faithful to mission Christ has entrusted to each of us here at Our Lady Mother of the Church.

We will welcome Fr. Jason and make him feel welcome. He is a wonderful priest and I am very happy that he is going to be here. Hospitality is sacred, I know he will find a welcoming community, a hospitable embrace, when he comes here. Reach out to him, ask how you can be of help, he will listen to you. This parish is a place where communion and community are found. I pray for Fr. Jason as he begins here, and I know he will share the love of God and his experience of Christ with you, as you will with him.

I thank all of you for allowing me to experience the Body of Christ in you, and with you, during the time we have spent together. I am very grateful to God for the twelve years he has allowed me to be here. I will pray for you, pray for me. 'Do not be afraid,' Jesus says, 'Behold I am with you even to the end of the world.' Jesus remains with us always, no matter where we are or who we are with. In him we can embrace the mission he has entrusted to each of us, and follow in his footsteps with confidence and joy.